

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



April 10, 2003



This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide Command Information materiel concerning world events and the U.S. military's role in those events. Ordnance specific events will be covered if appropriate. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil.

Bush speaks to Iraqi people in TV address

by Jennifer Loven

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Bush, launching a sweeping media campaign in war-torn Iraq, said in a televised address Thursday, "Your nation will soon be free." British ally Tony Blair assured Iraqis that coalition soldiers are "friends and liberators, not your conquerors."

The remarks were being beamed throughout Iraq from a U.S. C-130 Hercules aircraft. Using air- and ground-based transmitting facilities, the United States will broadcast five hours of programming five days a week on the same channels on which Iraqis have received state television programs.

Programming will be controlled by the U.S. and British military, but may include some rebroadcasts from independent news outlets in both countries, the White House said. U.S. and British government briefings may be featured.

For Iraqis, the effort means they will lose one state-run media outlet and gain another. But presidential spokesman Ari Fleischer said the Pentagon hopes that free, Iraqi-run media will soon flourish.

"Free press is a crucial part of a free Iraq and we anticipate that beginning to happen," he said.

In addition, the coalition on Thursday started publishing a newspaper called "The Times" in southern Iraq, an initial circulation of 10,000, the White House said. The broadcasts will also be heard on Iraqi radio and texts of the Bush-Blair remarks were translated into Arabic and distributed on flyers throughout Iraq.

Bush and Blair taped their remarks Tuesday during a war summit in Northern Ireland.

"Our only enemy is Saddam's brutal regime - and that regime is your enemy as well," Bush said.

Blair, in his message for the new station called "Towards Freedom," told Iraqis that the United States and Britain had not wanted war.



President Bush, seen in this image from video, in remarks televised throughout Iraq Thursday, April 10, 2003, tells citizens of the war-torn nation "at this moment, the regime of Saddam Hussein is being removed from power." The remarks were recorded Tuesday in Northern Ireland where Bush was met with Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair. (AP Photo/APTN)

But in refusing to give up his weapons of mass destruction, Saddam gave us no choice but to act. Now that the war has begun, it will be seen through to the end," the prime minister said.

The broadcast was part of a campaign to convince Iraqis and the rest of the Arab world that U.S. troops are not a hostile invasion force. There is still widespread opposition to the war throughout much of the world.

"The goals of our coalition are clear and limited," Bush said. He said they included, ending Saddam's regime, ridding the nation of weapons of mass destruction, providing security, respecting religious

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Bush speaks to Iraqi people in TV address continued

traditions, building a representative government and creating a sovereign nation.

“The nightmare that Saddam Hussein has brought to your nation will soon be over,” the president said in a two-and-a-half minute address produced with Arabic subtitles. It was the first public word from Bush since jubilant Iraqis welcomed the collapse of Saddam’s government in Baghdad. “You deserve to live as free people. And I assure every citizen of Iraq: Your nation will soon be free.”

The Bush-Blair addresses came a day after Baghdad fell into coalition hands and much of Iraq was being overtaken by British and U.S. forces.

The two leaders sought to assure there would be no repeat of 1991, when Saddam crushed a popular uprising after the Persian Gulf War was stopped by Bush’s father, then-President George Bush.



AIRBORNE DELIVERY MENU — A U.S. Army soldier of the 82nd Airborne Division hands a box of humanitarian aid rations to a local child in central Iraq. The 82nd Airborne Division is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kyran V. Adams

“This regime will be gone and ended,” Blair said. He also said Iraqi oil, which made Saddam “one of the richest men in the world,” will now help Iraqis prosper.

While keeping a close eye on progress in Iraq, the president also was turning attention to his economic agenda and hopes for a free-trade pact between the United States and five Central American nations.

The negotiations for yet another tariff-lowering agreement, begun in January and expected to wrap up by the end of the year, were to dominate a session Thursday in which Bush was welcoming the leaders of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua to the White House.

Bush advisers have sought to portray the president as engaged on domestic issues - particularly the sputtering economy that has Americans concerned about their financial future - despite a heavy focus on the war and planning for an interim Iraqi government after hostilities end.

Bush, a staunch believer in free markets, has aggressively pursued deals to lift trade barriers as he seeks to nudge the economy into better shape.

In addition to the pending pact in Central America, the White House wants to complete negotiations with Morocco this year and with Australia and five countries in Southern Africa in 2004. Deals were recently inked with Chile and Singapore. The idea is to push ahead on these several smaller fronts and create momentum for bigger deals.

The administration is currently involved in 34-nation talks to create the world’s largest free trade zone, covering the Western Hemisphere, and global trade talks involving the 144 nations that are members of the World Trade Organization.

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Baghdad is hit by arson and looting

by Hamza Hendawi

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Looting surged and government buildings were set on fire across Baghdad on Thursday while U.S. troops concentrated more on fighting pockets of resistance than on keeping order.

Tens of thousands of people - young and old, men and women - roamed the city in the second round of looting to hit Baghdad since the fall of Saddam Hussein on Wednesday, with American forces making little or no effort to stop them as they carried off TV sets, refrigerators, carpets and other plunder.

Many of the looters moved into the city center from the poor outlying districts with wheelbarrows and pushcarts, intent on getting their share of the booty.

Some U.S. forces received word Thursday that they should begin trying to stop the looting, but they were only just beginning to devise ways to do so.

There's civilian looting like crazy, all over the place. There just aren't enough of us to clear it out," said Marine Lance Cpl. Darren Pickard, 20, Merced, Calif., who was trying to protect an Iraqi police academy compound that was being picked over by looters.

Reinforcements had to be called in to help protect the compound's armory, which included hundreds of rifles along with grenades, knives, pistols and mortars.

At U.S. Central Command, Maj. Gen. Gene Renuart said that the Iraqis' anger toward symbols of the regime is not surprising, after years of oppression. He said the U.S. military's civil affairs teams will work with neighborhood leaders to try to restore calm while the Iraqis rebuild their police force.

He said curfews are possible, but "our intent is not to be heavy-handed, but it is to ensure that stability is brought back to the areas." He said the military hopes to establish "compassionate relationships with members of the community."

Meanwhile, smoke billowed from buildings across the city. Marines said Iraqi holdouts were setting fire to their own quarters and blaming the Americans. In at least one case, however, looters were seen setting fire to some buildings in the Interior Ministry complex.

U.S. troops occupied the Oil Ministry. But the nine-story Ministry of Transport building was gutted by fire, as was the Iraqi Olympic headquarters, while the Ministry of Education was partially burned. Near the Interior Ministry, the office building of Saddam's son Odai stood damaged, its upper floors blackened.

A building on fire near the Interior Ministry was rocked by deafening explosions apparently caused by ammunition and rockets stashed inside. The blasts went on for more than 15 minutes. No immediate injuries were reported.

In and around the capital, skirmishes flared between U.S. forces and



Iraqis show their new possessions as hundreds went on looting government buildings in Baghdad Wednesday April 9, 2003. At police stations, government ministries, the headquarters of the Iraqi Olympic Committee, looters unhindered by any police presence made off with computers, furniture, telephones, even military jeeps. (AP Photo/Jerome Delay)

Iraqi holdouts, and bursts of gunfire and explosions continued to echo through the city nearly a day after the people of Baghdad danced in the streets over the fall of Saddam.

Marines seized a palace on the northern outskirts of the capital early Thursday in a fierce, seven-hour battle that demonstrated all too clearly that the fighting is far from over in Iraq. One Marine was killed and as many as 20 were wounded.

Marines also battled holdout fighters at a Baghdad mosque and the house of a leader of Saddam's Baath Party.

Marines set up checkpoints at the heart of the city, conducting thorough searches of all vehicles and body searches of passengers and drivers. Some Marines crouched behind sandbags, weapons at the ready, as the searches were conducted.

Around the city, looters hit stores and government installations, including the Irrigation Ministry, the Transport Ministry, the Air Force officers club, the government computer center, the Olympic hospital and state laboratories.

The German Embassy, a three-story off-white building in the center of al-Karada district, was also sacked. Looters emerged with air conditioners and computers. Looters also cleaned out the French Cultural Center and Odai's house, the Arab TV network Al-Jazeera reported.

In the city center, donkey-drawn and horse-drawn carts were seen loaded with office furniture, TV sets, appliances and carpets.

In Saddam City, a poor, densely populated Shiite Muslim section of Baghdad, residents set up roadblocks and confiscated looted items, sending them to a mosque, said Imam Amar Al-Saadi.

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Going home entails excitement, planning

by U.S. Army Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke / 11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – After completing a full tour of duty outside the continental United States soldiers are filled with anticipation and excitement to get back home to family and friends.

This is exactly how soldiers from the 503rd Maintenance Company, deployed here from Fort Bragg, N.C. are feeling. Due to current world events, the company stayed in Bagram an extra month, and 53 soldiers from the unit redeployed April 7 after spending seven months in country.

The deployment went fast, said Sgt. Ferdinando Gandy, operations noncommissioned for the 503rd. Gandy attributed that to the seven-day workweek.

But all the work will pay off. He said his reward for the time put in here will be traveling to a Nevada ranch. As Gandy returns home to see his mother, baby girl and siblings in Fayetteville, N.C., he leaves behind advice to new service members arriving at Bagram.

“Don’t fret. It will be over before you know it,” he said. “Someone will replace you as someone replaced me.”

Construction supervisor Sgt. Raymond Williams said he enjoyed his time here, which went fast. He said he wants to tell new soldiers to remember, “It’s all in what you make of it.”

“(This deployment) could be a good thing — could be a bad thing. It’s whatever you make it,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Baker, 503rd Maintenance Company.

When Baker returns home, he said, he plans to retire after serving his country for 20 years. He will go home to North Carolina to fish, hunt and watch NASCAR races.

Individual redeploying soldiers should remember a couple things, said Spc. Kevin Christensen, a member of the Army Reserve’s 531st



Soldiers from the 503rd Maintenance Company, deployed from Fort Bragg, N.C. wait outside the Joint Processing and Readiness Center at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan April 7 while waiting for their flight home. U.S. Army photo by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke

Movement Control Team, deployed from Manhattan, Kansas.

“We can’t forecast any flights until a day in advance. It’s a first-come, first-served basis,” he said, adding, “You must have your orders (to fly).”

Christensen said he wants people to understand that the MCT is just a liaison, and what they tell to people is just a relay of information. “Don’t kill the messenger,” he said.

If a whole unit is redeploying, it can fill out a Joint Movement Control request form that enables a unit to use an entire aircraft. But, Christensen cautioned, it is still a first-come, first-served basis.

Precedence for flights is always taken in the following order: aeromedical, emergencies, redeploying and finally missions, he said.

A U.S. Army sniper takes aim on irregular Iraqi forces firing upon American troops from behind a mosque in Baghdad Wednesday, April 9, 2003. (AP Photo/John Moore)



Iraqi women wait as a sniper of the 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division guards a depot containing food and water intended for public distribution in Najaf, Iraq, Tuesday, April 8, 2003. (AP Photo/Jean-Marc Bouju)



U.S. forces bring robot to war

By Timothy L. Rider /
Information Management Task
Force

CAMP PENNSYLVANIA, Kuwait — While airborne robots, otherwise known as unmanned aerial vehicles, first gained notoriety in Operation Desert Storm, a treads-on-the-ground cousin, the “Packbot,” has now debuted in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

A robot was used to remotely look for enemy soldiers thought to be hiding in an agricultural center building March 30th. The following day it was used to remotely examine equipment left on an airfield before engineers from the 101st Airborne Division cleared the runway for humanitarian relief operations, according to Army Sgt. 1st Class Tim South, special projects noncommissioned officer for the rapid equipping force.

In both operations, Packbot operators used the robot to verify there were, in fact, no enemy soldiers in the building or booby traps or mines on the airfield, where the enemy was believed to have conducted “airfield denial operations,” South said.

He noted the robot is capable of maneuvering over and around obstacles. It is equipped with remote infrared and optical cameras that operators can use to closely examine caves, rooms or airfields while at a distance safely away from the effects that South calls “surprises,” booby traps, mines, weapons caches, or enemy soldiers.

Operators use a wireless controller to maneuver the robot and control the camera. The view from the cameras is seen through a helmet-mounted eyepiece, according to Maj. Keith McGuire, project leader for the rapid equipping force.

The robot is maneuverable enough to climb stairs and continue even if it is flipped over. “It pretty much maneuvers over all terrain,” South said. It is also equipped with an infrared light so it can maneuver and see in total darkness.

South said there are two reasons why this equipment is valuable to soldiers: “One, you know what to expect when you go in the objective. Two, if you don’t have the equipment, the soldier is going to possibly find (trouble) the hard way. He may contact the enemy, trip the mine, or set the booby trap.”

Robots have been turned over to engineers in the division at the request of the 101st Division commander, said South, who deployed



Packbot” is used to remotely examine equipment left on an airfield in Iraq before engineers from the 101st Airborne Division clear the runway for humanitarian relief operation. U.S. Army photo by Timothy L. Rider

with McGuire and the engineers from Camp Pennsylvania to Iraq for one week to train them in Packbot operations and maintenance. “In the long haul we’re not going to be there to operate it. It will be turned over to soldiers,” South said.

The Packbot was first used in combat in July of 2002 to examine caves and a building complex in Nasarat, Afghanistan, according to Col. Bruce Jette, director of the rapid equipping force.



U.S. Army soldiers from A Company 3rd Battalion 7th Infantry Regiment search a civilian after he crossed a bridge over the Tigris, ignoring warning shots, into an American position in Baghdad Thursday, April 10, 2003. In background is a statue of Saddam Hussein.(AP Photo/John Moore)

Shinseki pins Purple Hearts on six soldiers

by Michael E. Dukes

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 9, 2003) — In a series of bedside visits April 5, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Eric K. Shinseki presented six Purple Hearts to soldiers wounded during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“This is a medal that no soldier seeks or wishes for,” Shinseki told the soldiers’ family members during each bedside presentation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Despite being told they did not have to get out of their bed, the soldiers, who were able, stood at attention during the presentation. Mothers, fathers, wives and other family members wiped tears from their eyes as the general pinned the medals.

Shinseki presented Purple Hearts to:

Staff Sgt. Jamie A. Villafane, 30th Infantry Battalion 1st Headquarters and Headquarters Company Mechanized, Ft. Benning, Ga.

Cpl. Damien E. Luten, 507th OD Company Maintenance Patriot, Fort Bliss, Texas

Staff Sgt. Tarik Jackson, 507th OD Company Maintenance Patriot, Fort Bliss, Texas

Spc. Manual Avila, 75th Infantry Battalion 2nd Company A Ranger, Fort Lewis, Wash.

Sgt. Charles Horgan 30th Infantry Battalion 1st Headquarters and Headquarters Company Mechanized, Fort Benning, Ga.

Spc. Scott Acosta, 7th Infantry Battalion 3rd Company C, Ft. Stewart, Ga.

Nine OIF soldiers have been awarded Purple Hearts at Walter Reed

‘To Our Soldiers’ provides direct link to GIs

by Bruce Anderson

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, April 9, 2003) - The Army has established a new Web link that makes it easier to send a greeting to soldiers serving in the War on Terrorism.

The link, called “To Our Soldiers,” is on the Army Home Page. People interested in sending a message to a soldier can also access the program directly at <http://www.army.mil/tooursoldiers/>.

While similar Web sites for sending messages to service members in general already existed, there was no way to send a message specifically to someone in the Army.

“This link gives people a way to be connected directly to soldiers,” said Lt. Col. Mark H. Wiggins, Web director for the Army Home Page.

“To Our Soldiers” was launched the night of April 8 and enjoyed immediate resonance. Within minutes of being launched, more than



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Erik K. Shinseki pins a Purple Heart on the chest of Spc. Manual Avila, a Ranger with the 75th Infantry Battalion from Fort Lewis, Wash. (photo by Michael E. Dukes)

since Mar. 28 when the first casualties began arriving from Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

Gen. George Washington established the Purple Heart in 1772. It was originally awarded for military merit, but during World War II it became an award for service members wounded in combat and posthumously presented to those who died from combat wounds.

Walter Reed has treated 34 battle casualties since Mar. 28. All were transferred from Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

(Editor’s note: Michael E. Dukes is a staff writer for the Stripe newspaper at Walter Reed.)

20 messages were received, and by morning, the number of messages was more than 200, Wiggins said.

“The numbers are not the important thing,” Wiggins said. “What is important is providing the capability for people to get their message to soldiers.”

To Our Soldiers is designed for posting a message to an individual soldier or to a group, but is not designed to be a letter writing service, instant-messaging service, e-mail service, bulletin board or general chat service.

Each message is viewed individually, and may be edited or deleted if the content violates operational security, privacy or propriety.

(Editor’s note: Army Home Page is the preferred spelling and usage for the Army’s official Web site.)

Army's UXO-busters 'fire in the hole'

Story and photos by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke / 11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — Looking off into the distance, an anti-tank landmine disintegrates and giant mushroom cloud forms.

The 705th Explosive Ordnance Company, deployed from Fort Polk, La., sees this daily. The company uses two of Bagram's ranges to explode landmines, rockets and bombs.

The company is always on call and waits for word of suspected unexploded ordnance and incidents, reporting to the site within 30 minutes. A team leader and member will arrive at the scene, to remove the unexploded ordnance.

During off-duty hours, the company has one to two hours to report to the scene. Someone is always on stand-by to answer a call, and the quick reaction force waits to be tasked.

Two nights ago, the unit was called to get a 120-mm rocket launcher.

Once the company retrieves a certain amount of UXOs, they proceed to one of the two ranges to detonate the ordnance. After a safety briefing is given and the blasting caps are in place, the team puts in a demolition request.

They then warn all aircraft and the entry check points so they know they are not under attack.

When the demolition request is given, the team waits 30 minutes before blowing up the ordnance. Thirty minutes is enough time to inform everyone of the scheduled explosion.

The team leader then waits for a final okay to explode the UXO.

Even though the coalition forces here have EODs, 705th is the primary assest.

"Even though (the Estonian EOD) aren't part of our battalion, they come with us on missions," said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Brown, EOD section noncommissioned officer in charge.

The Estonians were out on the range Thursday when Norwegian soldiers set off a series of three UXOs to try out different techniques of exploding mines and rockets.



Norwegian soldiers prepare an old rifle for explosion here April 3. C4 is plastered on top of it, which will help detonation. U.S. Army photo by Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke

Team leader, Brown, said this was the first time the coalition forces used the range. They will possibly use it in the future.

"Everybody can use the range," he said. "But we are more familiar with it, so we supervise."

Some coalition forces arrived at Bagram a short time ago, including the Royal Thai Army. The Norwegians only arrived here about a month ago. Even though detonating a few UXOs may not seem like much, it fosters alliance between nations.



Egyptians watch television at a shop in Cairo as a statue of Saddam Hussein is toppled in Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, April 9, 2003. (AP Photo/Amr Nabil)

U.S. military forces get tax relief

WASHINGTON (AP) - There will be at least one less worry for American forces fighting in Iraq - unlike other Americans, they won't have to bother filing their tax returns by next Tuesday's April 15 deadline.

Treasury Secretary John Snow announced Thursday that service personnel will get an automatic extension on their filing deadline

and also will have all pay earned while they are in a combat zone excluded from income taxes.

"Relieving members of the military and their families from concerns about their taxes is a small token of the appreciation we owe them," Snow said in a statement detailing the tax relief measures that the military would receive.

"In recognition of their service to this country, all servicemen and women are provided an exclusion from income for the military pay they earn while in the combat zone and automatic extensions of time for filing a return or paying a tax," Snow said.

Snow said the exact types of tax relief are spelled out in an Internal Revenue Service Notice 2003-21, which is available on the IRS web site.



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Kurdish fighters are backdropped by the black fumes of a burning oil well in the outskirts of Kirkuk, northern Iraq, Thursday, April 10, 2003. American special forces and Kurdish troops made a significant progress towards the city, source of 40 percent of Iraq's oil revenue. Iraqi Kurds consider the rich city to be their capital. (AP Photo/Peter Dejong)

Baghdad is hit by arson and looting continued

On Wednesday, after looting first broke out in Baghdad, U.S. Central Command said American civil affairs troops were there and in other cities to help Iraqis move away from lawlessness and re-establish order.

However, Central Command spokesman Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks said he expected much of the unrest to die down on its own as the euphoria over the regime's collapse wore off. "We believe that this will settle down in due time," he said.

Around the city, most motorists were flying white flags. Some public buses were even running.

The Interior Ministry offices were being turned into a command center for U.S. forces, who went through them to see what they find.

Saddam pictures, posters, calendars and oil paintings adorned practically every surface. Some pictures of his face had been cut out or punched in with fists before U.S. forces got there. Some Marines, encountering large pictures of Saddam with his face cut out, posed for pictures with their own faces thrust through the hole.

Two floors down from the Interior Minister's office was the office of

an unidentified three-star general. On the bookshelf behind his desk sat a gold-embossed, green-leather volume dating to the 1990s. It resembled a family photo album, but the pictures - page after page - were of bombed-out buildings and charred, mangled corpses.

On Wednesday, in a scene that called to mind the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Marines used a winch to pull down a 40-foot bronze statue of Saddam and break it in half. Iraqis attacked the statue with sledgehammers and sticks, danced on its fallen chest and face, and threw garbage on it.

Others dragged the torn-off head through the streets, while children beat it with shoes and slippers - a grave insult in the Arab world.

Iraqis and Marines hugged, high-fived or shook hands. Some of the Marines held their rifles aloft in a victorious pose.

"Now my son can have a chance in life," said Bushra Abed, pointing to her 2-year-old son, Ibrahim.

EDITOR'S NOTE - Associated Press writers Ravi Nessman and Alexandra Zavis with the Marines in Baghdad also contributed to this report.

Marine: Statue event ‘crazy experience’

NEW YORK (AP) - The Marine corporal who was seen around the world as he scaled a 40-foot statue of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad and covered the face with an American flag called the event “a pretty crazy experience.”

“I was just trying my best to get the chain around his neck and put the flag on his head,” Cpl. Edward Chin, 23, said Thursday on ABC-TV’s “Good Morning America.”

Chin said he had second thoughts about what message the use of the flag might send the Iraqi people. Some said later it suggested U.S. occupation.

“At the moment, I was just doing what I was told to do by my commanding officer,” Chin said. “... I had to get the job done just like we’ve been doing out here in Iraq.”

Chin was quickly ordered to take the U.S. flag down and replace it with an Iraqi flag. Moments later, the towering bronze statue was pulled down, and cheering Iraqis tore it to pieces.

“It was a pretty crazy experience watching the whole crowd,” Chin said.

In New York, Chin’s family - who hadn’t seen him since Christmas - watched the events unfold on television.

“I thought, ‘Oh, my son, you are making history, you are part of the Iraqis’ liberation,’” said his father, Stanley Chin.

His fiancée, Anne Fu, said she knew Chin meant no disrespect when he put up the American flag.

“He wanted to show the Iraqi people that they were free, that they



Cpl. Edward Chin, from New York, of the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines Regiment, covers the face of a statue of Saddam Hussein with an American flag before toppling the statue in downtown Baghdad Wednesday, April 9, 2003. (AP Photo/ Jerome Delay)

were liberated, that the U.S. was there to help them and that Saddam is over,” she said.

Chin and his family are ethnic Chinese from Myanmar, formerly Burma. They moved to the United States when Chin was 1 week old and live in Brooklyn. Chin joined the Marines in 1999 and is stationed at the Marine Corps Air/Ground Combat Center in Twentynine Palms, Calif.

“I’m very proud of him,” sister Connie Chin told WWOR-TV. “Here’s a 23-year-old doing all these amazing things and representing America and representing it well, I think.”



The ‘Al Mansur,’ Iraqi President Saddam Hussein’s private yacht, lies dockside in central Basra April 10, 2003. Gangs of looters have descended on the homes of members of Saddam Hussein’s inner circle in Baghdad, taking everything from chandeliers to electrical wiring. Reuters photo.

U.S. military campaign called 'textbook'

by Connie Cass

WASHINGTON (AP) - This time, military historians are studying what went right: the Patton-like audacity of the three-week charge into Baghdad, fewer U.S. lives lost than had been feared, success in undermining Saddam Hussein without dreaded street-to-street city fighting.

"The planners took great risks and they guessed absolutely right," said historian and retired Army Lt. Col. James Carafano.

"Even the most optimistic probably expected more of a fight," he said, "and more than 100 or so American casualties thus far."

In military history books, experts predict, the war will be noted for impressive use of special forces to gather intelligence, both on the ground and through new spy technology, and the precise targeting of bombs that killed and demoralized Iraqi forces, while limiting civilian deaths in comparison to history's devastating air raids.

It also tested a strategy for avoiding urban warfare - loosely cordon off the city and use selective strikes to defeat an opposing army's willpower while encouraging its citizens to rebel.

"What this campaign was really designed to do was get a force to Baghdad and demonstrate to the people that the regime was no longer in charge," said Carafano, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, a private research group. "Obviously, that worked."

Pictures of jubilant crowds greeting soldiers in Baghdad have been so striking that Maj. Gen. Gene Renuart was careful to offset them Thursday with an emphasis on remaining threats in the capital and to the north.

"There's still a long way to go," said Renuart, director of operations at U.S. Central Command.

It was a switch from just a week ago, when the Bush administration was pestered by a chorus of retired military brass-turned-TV commentators and others who worried that the 300,000 coalition troops sent to the desert region weren't enough to do the job. Now U.S. leaders are all but saying "I told you so."

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld called the war's progress "nothing short of spectacular." Vice President Dick Cheney bragged about "one of the most extraordinary military campaigns ever conducted" - noting comparisons to Army Gen. George S. Patton's famous push through France in 1944.

The 300-mile surge to Baghdad commanded by Gen. Tommy Franks echoed Patton's bold strategy of bypassing the Germans whenever possible, instead of fighting, to maintain the momentum of his drive forward.

Still, military historian and author Norman Polmar said there's little value in comparisons to Patton's dash, or to the Russians' even faster blitzes against the Germans and the Japanese.

"The Germans had the best army in the world in World War II," Polmar said.

In contrast, U.S. forces held a tremendous advantage over Iraq's military in training, leadership and equipment.

"We had everything going for us," said Polmar. "The only two questions were how long it would take and how many casualties."

Or as Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, put it: Iraq's execution on the battlefield "has really been sad."

A better comparison is to the first Gulf War, although it had a different objective - liberating Kuwait from Iraqi invaders.

"In the Gulf War, we bombed for a month, fought for four days and just got the southern part of the country, about one-third," said Polmar. "If this is the end of it, we fought for just over three weeks and have taken the country and destroyed the regime."

Cheney noted that, unlike the 1991 war, coalition forces were able to quickly safeguard oil fields in southern Iraq and cut off Saddam's ability to launch missiles at neighboring countries. And precision-guided munitions, a new technology then, are now standard equipment.

Intelligence from special operations forces - who sharpened their techniques in Afghanistan - made the precision weapons more effective, said retired Col. Raymond Bluhm, a historian at the Association of the U.S. Army.

"When you have such precise targeting as we apparently had in two cases against Saddam himself, that's unheard of," Bluhm said.

Geography plays a part too.

Despite the heat and sandstorms, the desert terrain proved more hospitable to U.S. air power than the jungles of Vietnam, where dense foliage hid the enemy.

Unlike Vietnam and Korea at war, Iraq didn't benefit from substantial supplies or support from its neighbors.

But past conflicts may still carry warnings.

If fighting breaks out among the factions of Iraq, the U.S. experience in Somalia will offer lessons about the difficulty of pacifying a civil war.

"If civil society breaks down, then there won't be enough troops," said Carafano. "If we're in the middle of a civil war, forget it."

Cheney acknowledged an obligation to help the Iraqi people until democracy is established.

"In the final analysis," he told newspaper editors, "history will judge us, and hopefully the people of the region will judge us, based upon what happens next in Iraq."

North Korea: strong military deters U.S.

by Christopher Torchia

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) - North Korea said the Iraq war proved the need for it to maintain a strong military deterrent against the United States, as the communist nation's withdrawal from the global nuclear arms control treaty officially took effect Thursday.

The North's comments came a day after U.N. Security Council members said they were worried by North Korea's standoff with Washington, but refused to condemn it for pulling out of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. China and Russia had opposed condemning Pyongyang.

Drawing parallels with the U.S. showdown with Iraq, North Korea said that bowing to demands to abandon its suspected nuclear weapons development would lead to inspections and disarmament, setting the stage for a U.S. invasion.

"The Iraqi war launched by the U.S. pre-emptive attack clearly proves that a war can be prevented and the security of the country and the nation can be ensured only when one has physical deterrent force," said KCNA, the North's state-run news agency. It did not specifically refer to nuclear weapons as a deterrent.

The withdrawal from the nuclear arms control treaty officially took effect Thursday, three months after the North announced it was pulling out. In a similar standoff a decade ago, North Korea announced its withdrawal from the treaty but suspended its decision just before the 90-day notice period lapsed.

Pyongyang and Washington negotiated an energy deal that ended the earlier crisis, though a solution to the current standoff could be more difficult because U.S. officials have taken a harder line this time. They have refused North Korean appeals for direct talks, saying they will not give into blackmail and that other countries must be involved in any solution.

North Korea has said it would ignore any censure by the United Nations, and that economic sanctions - a measure that the Security Council could eventually consider - would constitute a declaration of war.

"The U.N. Security Council discussion of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula itself is a prelude to war," said North Korea's Pyongyang Radio. North Korea has issued similar warnings in the past, and belligerence is a trademark of its statements.

The radio, monitored by South Korea's Yonhap news agency, called U.S. efforts to discuss the nuclear dispute at the council "a serious provocation, rupturing efforts for dialogue and spiking tension on the Korean Peninsula."

North Korea has never said that it is developing nuclear weapons, though the United States says it already has one or two atomic bombs. Washington says it has no plans to invade North Korea and seeks a peaceful solution to the nuclear problem, but has not ruled out a military option



Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov, left, shakes hands with an unidentified member of the South Korean Special Warfare Command (SWC) as South Korean Lt. Gen. Kim Yun-Suc, center, commander of the SWC, looks on during Ivanov's visit to a South Korean military base in Seoul Thursday, April 10, 2003. Russia and South Korea agreed Thursday to work together to seek a peaceful solution to a standoff over North Korea's suspected nuclear weapons programs. (AP Photo/Choi Jae-Ku, Pool)

Washington wants the problem to be addressed in a multilateral forum including Russia, China, Japan and South Korea.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov held talks on the nuclear issue Thursday with South Korean officials in Seoul. Moscow was once a close ally of North Korea, though the friendship faded after the end of the Cold War.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said Ivanov "shared our view that the two countries should closely cooperate to find a peaceful solution" to the crisis.

Ivanov said the two sides agreed the crisis should not be worsened by making "hostile and extreme expressions," and he warned against driving North Korea "into a situation where a solution is impossible." He did not elaborate.

"Solution of the North Korea problem presupposes that Pyongyang returns to all the international non-proliferation regimes and puts its sites under IAEA control, having received in return a guarantee of its security, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as no attacks," Russia's Interfax news agency quoted Ivanov as saying.

The IAEA is the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N. nuclear watchdog.

The standoff flared in October when U.S. officials said North Korea admitted it had a clandestine nuclear program in violation of a 1994 agreement with the United States.

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Afghan army soldiers clash with Taliban

by Todd Pitman

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) - Soldiers of the new Afghan national army battled resurgent Taliban fighters in eastern Afghanistan on Wednesday, killing a former Taliban minister in a four-hour gunbattle, state television reported.

The former minister of borders and tribal affairs, Ammanullah, was killed during a firefight in Orgun, 108 miles south of Kabul. Several other suspected Taliban fighters also were killed, and four government soldiers were injured, state TV said. Ammanullah used only one name.

The Afghan national army, which is being trained by American and French troops, now numbers about 3,000 men. The government of President Hamid Karzai wants to see the army grow to 70,000 and hopes it will replace tens of thousands of militiamen who are loyal to various warlords around the country.

However, Karzai's authority is largely limited to Kabul, the capital, which is patrolled by a 5,000 strong international peacekeeping force.

Most of Afghanistan is controlled by powerful warlords who rule their own patches of territory with little interference from the central government and often turn their guns on each other.

The latest round of factional fighting in the north broke out Tuesday in Maimana, the capital of Faryab province. At least four combatants were killed and four wounded during clashes between forces loyal to ethnic Uzbek warlord Gen. Abdul Rashid Dostum and those of his Tajik rival, Gen. Atta Mohammed, said Qudrat Ullah Hormat, spokesman for Atta Mohammed.

Hormat said four of Mohammed's soldiers were killed and four injured in an exchange of automatic weapons fire.

Earlier Wednesday, Afghan authorities dispatched a team of mediators to the area to resolve simmering tensions between the two rival factions, said Sayed Noor Ullah, one of Dostum's senior officials.

North Korea: strong military deters U.S. continued

Washington and its allies suspended fuel shipments promised under the 1994 deal, and Pyongyang retaliated by expelling U.N. monitors, taking steps to restart frozen facilities capable of making nuclear bombs and withdrawing from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Reconciliation efforts between the two Koreas have suffered because of the nuclear standoff. Cabinet-level talks between the two sides did not take place as scheduled this week, and other joint projects have been postponed.

On Thursday, North Korea described the South Korean National Assembly as a "group of warmongers," in part because of its decision to approve the dispatch of non-combat troops to support the U.S.-led campaign in Iraq.

Dostum and Mohammed agreed to work together after the Taliban government fell in a U.S.-led war in 2001, but the two sides have fought repeatedly.

It was not clear what sparked the fighting. Ullah characterized Tuesday's skirmish as a "local dispute" between two commanders - Dostum's Mohammad Hashim and Mohammed's Gulam Farooq.



An Iraqi man waves a white flag in front of U.S. soldiers on an armored vehicle in Baghdad April 10, 2003. Kurdish fighters took the northern Iraqi oil city of Kirkuk, as U.S. troops fought fierce skirmishes against die-hard supporters of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad.

An official portrait of Saddam Hussein lies broken and shot up by U.S. Army troops at a presidential palace in Baghdad, Iraq Wednesday, April 9, 2003. (AP Photo/John Moore)



VP Cheney compares then and now

by Linda D. Kozaryn, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, April 9, 2003 – A dozen years ago, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney directed Operation Desert Storm. Today Vice President Cheney has the historical perspective to compare the 1991 Gulf War with today's Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"With less than half of the ground forces and two-thirds of the air assets used 12 years ago in Desert Storm," he said, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Army Gen. Tommy Franks "have achieved a far more difficult objective."

"Saddam Hussein apparently expected that this war would essentially be a replay of Desert Storm," Cheney said in an address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. Even though the Iraqi dictator knew nearly 250,000 coalition forces were in the Gulf on the brink of war, Saddam seems to have assumed he would have time to destroy Iraq's oil fields and bridges.

But Franks' bold tactics foiled Saddam, Cheney said. Operation Iraqi Freedom's commander made the most of every technological advantage of the U.S. military, and coalition forces succeeded in taking the enemy by surprise. Overall, he said, the coalition campaign in Iraq has displayed vastly improved capabilities over those of the Gulf War.

"In (Operation) Desert Storm, only 20 percent of our air- to-ground fighters could guide a laser-guided bomb to target," Cheney said. "Today, all of our air-to-ground fighters have that capability."

"In Desert Storm, it usually took up to two days for target planners to get a photo of a target, confirm its coordinates, plan the mission and deliver it to the bomber crew. Now we have near real-time imaging of targets with photos and coordinates transmitted by e-mail to

aircraft already in flight.

"In Desert Storm, battalion, brigade and division commanders had to rely on maps, grease pencils and radio reports to track the movements of our forces. Today our commanders have a real-time display of our armed forces on their computer screens.

Cheney pointed out the critical importance of the B-2 bomber. "On a single bombing sortie," he noted, "a B-2 can hit 16 separate targets, each with a 2,000-pound, precision-guided, satellite-based weapon."

"The superior technology we now possess is perhaps the most obvious difference between the Gulf War and the present conflict, but there are many others," he continued. "Desert Storm began with a 38-day air campaign, followed by a brief ground attack. In Operation Iraqi Freedom, the ground war began before the air war."

"In 1991, Saddam Hussein had time to set Kuwait's oil fields ablaze. In the current conflict, forces sent in early protected the 600 oil fields in southern Iraq, prevented an environmental catastrophe and safeguarded a resource that's vital for the future of the people of Iraq."

The vice president compared Saddam's firing of Scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia 12 years ago. "This time was different," he said. "Again, thanks to our special operations forces, which seized control of the missile launch baskets in western Iraq, preventing their use by the enemy."

He praised the vital role that U.S., British, Australian and Polish special ops forces have played a vital role in the success of the current Iraqi campaign.

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Smoke billows in central Baghdad on April 10, 2003. U.S. Marines fought a fierce four-hour battle at a Baghdad mosque where senior Iraqi leaders had been thought to be holed up, as U.S. warplanes attacked areas of the city under the control of Arab fighters. Reuters photo.

Troops in southern Iraq focus on processing, care of Iraqi POWs

by Sandra Jontz, Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Instead of planning ways to kill their enemy, soldiers in the southeastern part of Iraq instead planned Wednesday on how to feed, house and make them comfortable.

In 21 days of combat, coalition forces have rounded up about 7,300 prisoners, former combatants who now will be housed in a makeshift tent city in the desert outside of Umm Qasr, said Army Col. John Della Jacono, deputy chief of staff for the Coalition Forces Land Component Command in Iraq.

“Most of the EPWs [enemy prisoners of war] are not hungry. They are well-taken care of, all the way from Baghdad to this location,” Della Jacono said Wednesday in a live videoconference linked to reporters in Qatar and at the Pentagon.

Of the mass, Wednesday, 236 were receiving medical treatment either on the U.S. hospital ship USNS Comfort, or in field hospitals set up in various locations in Iraq, said Della Jacono, who has been a military police officer for most of his 28 years of service.

On Monday, the Army’s 800th Military Police Brigade out of Uniondale, N.Y., took over the facility at Umm Qasr, originally erected by British forces with various tents and an impressive mess hall erected “in record time.”

The “quite extensive” compound of tents is set up in the desert and surrounded by constant wire and even guard towers.

“It’s a mini-town, if you will,” Della Jacono said. Fifteen to 20 prisoners will be assigned per tent and the Umm Qasr compound, which could eventually house up to 24,000 if necessary, he said. Not all of the 7,300 prisoners have arrived yet at the Umm Qasr facility.

Coalition forces have had a hard time determining who is who among the prisoners because so few are clad in full military uniforms, he said.

VP Cheney compares then and now continued

“During Operation Desert Storm, we faced a massive flow of refugees in need of aid and shelter,” Cheney said. “But so far, in Operation Iraqi Freedom, we’ve averted a large-scale humanitarian crisis.

U.S. and Royal Marines succeeded in taking the al Faw peninsula and cleared a path for humanitarian aid. And today, even as fighting continues, coalition forces are bringing food and water and medical supplies to liberated Iraqis.”

Cheney concluded with a recent quote by military historian Victor Davis Hanson, who calls the Iraqi Freedom campaign “historically unprecedented” and predicts its logistics will be studied for decades.

“By any fair standard of even the most dazzling charges in military history,” the historian wrote, “the Germans in the Ardennes in the spring of 1940, or Patton’s romp in July of 1944, the present race to Baghdad is unprecedented in its speed and daring and in the lightness of its casualties.”

But officials believe they might have two or three key regime general officers, though he provided no additional information as to how valuable those prisoners might be to the coalition campaign.

Some prisoners are speaking freely with U.S. forces, sharing information on enemy troop readiness and cohesion, he said.

At first, officials planned to house an estimated 50,000 prisoners, but with the war seemingly drawing to an end, it appears as if that number will be much lower. The figure also is lower than the more than 83,000 prisoners taken during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, he said.

“That was a different campaign. A lot of them from Desert Storm were out there weathering aerial bombardments for a significant number of weeks. A lot of the guys were in foxholes and not being fed. They were starving,” Della Jacono said.

They also had invaded Kuwait and were trapped in the country once ground coalition forces entered. In this campaign, they’ve had to ability to withdraw and go home, he said.

This week, military lawyers will begin the arduous vetting process to determine who of the prisoners should remain classified as prisoners of war, who are civilian combatants, who should be allowed to return home, and who, if any, should face criminal prosecution.

Once they arrive at the Umm Qasr facility, prisoners receive prayer blankets and Qurans and two hot meals a day — soup, tea and bread in the mornings, and rice, meats and vegetables in the evening. Iraqi prisoners prepare some of the evening meals, Della Jacono said. They also receive boxed meals, juices and water.

Representatives from the International Committee of the Red Cross are at the facility and have visited with prisoners, he said.

The United States has no plans to transport any of the holding facility at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, set up to house prisoners taken during conflicts in Afghanistan.

“This theater internment facility is the final home ... for these EPWs ... and all captured are expeditiously moved back to this location,” he said.

